

The Plans Examiner

VOL. 9, NO. 6

JULY 2003

Topics

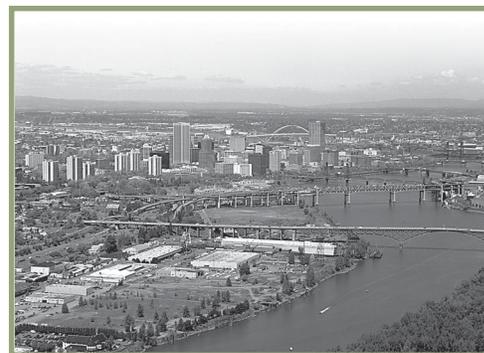
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Development Services develops new programs

We’ve launched a few new programs that you should know about. In June, the Major Projects Group began work on the South Waterfront Project. This month, the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) christened the new Customer Service and Public Information Program. Soon the Facility Permit Program will get four more staff to handle increased demand for commercial inspections. And a new Code Review Division has been formed to identify and coordinate potential changes to the city’s development codes.

South Waterfront Project

The South Waterfront Project, located in the North Macadam District, is a 10-year enterprise that will include 20 blocks of high-rise mixed-use development with a value of \$1.5 billion. This will be the largest project to date for the Major Projects Group, which was created to provide a package of review, approval and inspection services for major construction projects. Gerding/Edlen Inc., the project developer, will pay additional fees for these specialized services.



The Bureau of Development Services works with the community and other bureaus to preserve and shape safe, vital, and well planned urban environments.



Customer Service and Public Information

The new Customer Service and Public Information Program began July 1 to expand the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) customer assistance efforts. A team from the bureau will meet with neighborhood and business groups to determine the kinds of information that are most wanted and needed. These discussions will help BDS tailor its informational materials and programs to fit those of you who will be using them.

The bureau’s Web site is also being enhanced to include appeal applications online and the ability to report work being done without a permit.

And a series of Customer Assistance Programs (CAPs) will be starting soon. The first of these, “Get Legal,” is designed to help customers who need to legalize past work done without a permit. For a fee, a team will work with you to develop plans and file necessary appeals to get the process on track.

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TRACK 2

Two-Track pilot for residential permits begins this month

From January 2002 to April 2003, the Development Services Center received and processed 1,372 permits for new, detached single-family homes. All of these permits went through the same process, regardless of the experience level of the builder. Beginning this month, we'll be pilot testing a two-track program tailored to meet the needs of the applicant, based on level of experience and familiarity with Portland building codes.

The pilot will follow 20 to 25 selected applicants in each track, from permit application through final inspections, and evaluate the results.

Track One is modeled on our current method and offers assistance to applicants who want extra help navigating the permit process. First-time applicants and those who have little or no experience with Portland's building codes will be required to use this track, but any applicant is may chose this level of assistance. The turnaround goal for permit applications on Track One is 15 working days from a completed application to the first review and five days for any rechecks.

In Track Two, designed for the veteran builder, the process moves more quickly. Applicants in Track Two will have demonstrated their ability to submit complete and accurate documents and understand and implement Portland's building codes and other requirements with limited assistance from our plan review staff. The turnaround goal for Track Two is to issue permits within 10 working days from the date a complete application is submitted.

We expect to begin the pilot project in mid-July. Participants will be selected based on their level of experience and/or demonstrated knowledge. Those selected must agree not to delay construction once permits are issued.

In the end, we will judge how successful applicants are throughout the permitting and construction process with maximum and minimum assistance from our plan reviewers. The results of the pilot will allow us to refine elements of the two-track program for new single-family residential construction and begin offering it to applicants in early 2004.

To find out more about the pilot project, call Bonnie Morris, 503-823-7883, or email, morrisb@ci.portland.or.us.

The Development Services Center
will be closed
Monday, September 1, 2003
for Labor Day

Lunch & Learn

Explore Zoning Code

Friday, July 11, 12 Noon to 1:30 pm

This month Lunch and Learn delves into "The History and Mystery of Title 33." Anyone who has ever been curious about how the Zoning Code was developed and why will want to attend this free presentation. You'll hear:

- The basics of Portland zoning history;
- The what and why of zoning – Zoning Code evolution;
- The language of zoning maps – what those symbols mean;
- How to navigate the Zoning Code – where to find what you need;
- The explanation of Base Zones, Overlay Zones, Plan Districts and Land Divisions.

Following the presentation, you'll be able to ask questions of the city's land use experts.

Mark your calendars for all of 2003

You have a standing invitation for Lunch and Learn,
*2nd Friday of every month
12 noon to 1:30 pm
1900 SW 4th Ave., Portland.
Second floor conference room.*

Join us!

Bring your lunch and learn the latest information to help keep your building and development projects on track. **Reservations are not required.**

Previews of coming attractions...

August 8, 2003 - "Top 10 Tips For Passing 1 & 2 Family Inspections"

To view or download

PowerPoint presentations from any of the previous Lunch and Learn sessions, visit the Bureau of Development Services Web site, www.bds.ci.portland.or.us, and click on "Lunch and Learn." You can also register for email notices announcing future Lunch and Learn events from this link.

JULY	AUG
11	8
SEP	OCT
12	10
NOV	DEC
14	12

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Facility Permit Program

In order to ease the process of routine inspections for such things as repairs or minor tenant improvements, the Facility Permit Program (FPP) links inspectors with customers who have large or multiple facilities. Because it's so popular, the FPP has been accumulating a list of new customers waiting to enroll.

To eliminate the backlog, the program will add a senior plumbing inspector, two senior building inspectors and an office specialist. Currently, 313 buildings representing 53 businesses and organizations participate in the program. The new staff will make it possible to add to the program the 75 buildings now on the waiting list.

Code Review Division

A newly-formed division within the Bureau of Development Services will soon be working to improve coordination among development review bureaus and identify opportunities for changes in the city's development-related codes.

Susan Feldman will manage the bureau's new Code Review Division. The division, composed of BDS staff specializing in the city's development codes, will support on-going regulatory improvement efforts.

A plan for a consolidated site development code is one of the results expected from this division, in addition to changes to the Planning and Zoning Code that improve everyday administration.

SDC fee increases effective July 1

Commissioner Leonard has made a commitment that the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) will not increase its building permit fees this year. Each year the individual bureaus assess their various permit fees and system development charges (SDCs). Based on code requirements and administrative policies, those fees may need to be adjusted. Although BDS will not be increasing fees this year, other infrastructure bureaus have made changes to their fees effective July 1. Plan review fees are also increasing slightly across the board. Each bureau has a Web page, which shows the new fees and explains the increases and how they are set.

Bureau of Environmental Services (BES)

Bureau of Environmental Services SDC's are increasing slightly to cover the increased costs of sewer maintenance and repair for new development.

- Sanitary sewer SDC – residential & commercial - \$2420 per equivalent dwelling unit
- Sewer line connection fee – residential & commercial - 0.632 per assessable square foot
- Sewer branch fee – residential & commercial - \$1772



To learn how fees and rates are calculated and view a complete list of charges administered by BES, visit the bureau's Web site, http://www.cleanrivers-pdx.org/tech_resources/sewer_rates.htm



Department of Transportation (PDOT)

Transportation System Development Charges (TSDCs) increase or decrease annually on July 1. The rate change is authorized by City code, section 17.15, and is based on the Oregon Composite Construction Cost Index published by the Oregon Highway Division.

For fiscal year 2003-2004, TSDC's have increased 6 percent. For details of the new rates, visit PDOT's Web site, <http://www.pdxtrans.org/SystemDevelopmentCharge/Rates.htm> or call Richard Eisenhauer, 503-823-7080.

Bureau of Parks and Recreation

Parks SDCs are dedicated to building new parks and improving existing facilities, but cannot be used to maintain existing parks. The fee increase for 2003-2004 is 1.2 percent and is applied as follows:

- New single-family unit - \$1,630
- Duplex per unit - \$1,630
- Multi-family dwelling per unit - \$1,051
- Manufactured home – \$1,108
- Accessory Dwelling unit - \$815
- Single-room Occupancy unit - \$629



For more information about Parks SDCs, how they are calculated and applied, visit the Park Bureau's Web site, www.portlandparks.org/Planning/SystemDevCharge.htm

Water Bureau

The Water Bureau SDC is a reimbursement fee based on the estimated replacement cost of existing water facilities minus depreciation. This fee is applied in accordance with ORS 223.297-314. For

2003-2004, SDCs will increase approximately 2.5 percent for all meter sizes as follows:

Meter Size	2003-04 fees	Meter Size	2003-04 fees
5/8"	\$1,557	3"	\$23,350
3/4"	\$2,335	4"	\$38,916
1"	\$3,892	6"	\$77,832
1.5"	\$7,783	8"	\$124,531
2"	\$12,453	10"	\$223,845



The complete updated list of Water Bureau fees can be viewed on the Water Bureau Web site, <http://www.water.ci.portland.or.us/devrev/intro.htm>. With questions about the methodology used to determine the cost basis for the Water Bureau's SDCs, call Stephanie Reid, 503-823-7503.

Customer service and decision making are vital to commissioner's strategy for improvement

Since Commissioner Randy Leonard joined the Portland City Council last year he has been an outspoken proponent of efficiency and effectiveness when it comes to interaction between the city and the public. "My main goal is to make the bureau more customer oriented with a focus on moving projects through the process as quickly as possible while complying with the codes," he says, regarding his assignment to the Bureau of Development Services.

"I believe we have an extremely knowledgeable and talented staff in the bureau, and I want them to feel free to make decisions based on the project and the customer's needs."

Commissioner Leonard comes to his post on the city council after serving nine years in the Oregon Senate and House and 25 years with the Portland Fire Bureau. "I have always wanted to see employees given the freedom to make decisions, using their best judgment and the knowledge of their particular specialty. That's the kind of environment I'm hoping to inspire in development services."

At the same time, he would like the average residential permit customer to be able to navigate the permit process without becoming frustrated. "People who are not developers should be able to come to the Development Services Center and know they can get help finding their way through the process."

After talking with different groups of customers, the commissioner's first recommendation was for a customer service awareness program for BDS staff. "I would have thought that permit fees would have been the main topic, but I discovered that the most important thing for most customers was getting helpful, consistent and clear communication."

With the Regulatory Improvement Workplan entering its second year, 24-hour online access to current information on permit status and many other program improvements, Commissioner Leonard is confident that the bureau is moving in the right direction. "I think the system works best for people who understand it, and clear and open communication is the key to understanding."

IVR system takes an added step for special inspections

To cut down on delays in your final inspections, the city's IVR 24-hour inspection request line is now equipped to check for the Final Summary Report on projects requiring special inspections. Customers are informed during the plan review process if a special inspection and Final Summary Report will be required. But now the IVR System also checks for the report, which is a signal that all work requiring a special inspection has been approved and is ready for the final inspection.

When you call to request a final inspection or a temporary occupancy, if IVR does not find the summary report on file, your request for a final inspection will not be accepted and you'll be instructed to call the Special Inspections Section, 503-823-7782, if you need more information.

Not all projects require special inspections and those that do are typically commercial.

Roof upgrades move to higher standard in wildland areas

On May 30, new regulations went into effect designating specific areas throughout the city as Wildfire Hazard Zones (WHZs). Full implementation of the regulations will take place by November 1. These designations are in line with a state statute enacted in 1993, which encourages local governments to identify the portions of their jurisdictions most likely to be involved in wildland fires.

Along with the adoption of the WHZs, the council adopted Appendix Chapter 5, "Wildfire Hazard Mitigation," of the Oregon Structural Specialty Code and enacted Section R328 of the One- and Two-Family Dwelling Code.

The most significant impact of the ordinance is on the selection of roofing materials. On commercial new construction and additions, or roof replacements of more than 50 percent in WHZs, roofing materials must be Class A or B fire rated. For one- and two-family dwellings, a Class C fire rating or better is required, meaning untreated shake roofs are not allowed.

For all structures in WHZs, replacing more than 50 percent of the roof triggers the requirement to bring up the whole roof to the new standards. Attic ventilation will also be required on one- and two-family dwellings when more than half the roof is replaced.

In determining which areas to propose for WHZ designation, the Fire Bureau considered slope of the land and the amount and dominant type of vegetation present. This WHZ designation project has been ongoing since 2001 in Portland.

For information on the new Wildfire Hazard Zone regulations, contact Dave Flood, Portland Fire Bureau, 503-823-0827, or Lori Graham, Bureau of Development Services, 503-823-3448.

Meetings on sensitive sites planned for new single-family construction

In September, the Bureau of Development Services will begin a program for new single-family permits on properties in sensitive areas. A meeting will be scheduled at the site to review special planning/zoning or site development requirements before permits are issued. These requirements may pertain to tree preservation, landscaping, land use conditions, location in a flood-plain, stabilization of steep slopes, on-site sanitary disposal or stormwater outfalls near creeks or streams.

The goal of the meeting will be to ensure that existing site conditions, as shown on the plans, are correct and that required site development details for the proposed construction are being met. By satisfying site development requirements before permits are issued, it's possible to alleviate costly construction delays.

If you're the builder on a project located on a sensitive site and it has been determined that you'll be required to have a pre-issuance meeting, staff will contact you to schedule the meeting. We will schedule these meetings as quickly as possible so permits will be issued in a timely manner.

Who attends the meeting?

The meeting will be held at the property. The Site Development inspector will be your main contact and may invite other development staff as needed to evaluate the site. The excavation contractor and you, as the builder, must attend the meeting and others of your staff may also participate.

What happens at the meeting?

The meeting will focus on specific issues that make the site a sensitive one, such as tree preservation or environmental protection. You will receive a written form before the meeting, instructing you how to prepare the site for the meeting and outlining what the inspector will be looking for.

How should the site be prepared?

Basically, you'll be asked to mark the following areas as indicated before the meeting:

- Stake the property corners;
- Mark the area to be disturbed with construction fences;
- Mark environmental zone boundaries with tape;
- Identify trees to be saved, including their root zones, with construction fences.

If there are other requirements, you'll be notified at the time the meeting is scheduled. Additional requirements may include identifying the exact location of silt fences, retaining walls, construction fences, stormwater outfalls and stockpile and staging areas.

If you have questions regarding the pre-issuance meeting for new single-family construction on sensitive sites, please call George Helm, Site Development Section plans examiner, 503-823-7201.

Historic building preservation and regulatory reform guide citizen task force

Preserving Portland's historic buildings while meeting current code requirements has always been a challenge. A new citizen's task force, convened by the Bureau of Development Services, has been charged with making historic building preservation regulations more user-friendly. This task force has also been assigned responsibility for reviewing the triggers in the city seismic code as a part of the FY 2002-2003 Regulatory Improvement Workplan.

The task force will propose updates to the triggers in the Interim Seismic Design Requirements, develop a Code Guide of commonly allowed alternate materials and methods for

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Noise variance needed for longer hours

If you're planning to work longer because of the extra daylight hours, you may need to notify the neighbors and get a noise variance from the City. Get a noise variance if you'll be working before 7:00 a.m., after 6:00 p.m. or on Sundays; or if noise levels will exceed 85 dB. The application is simple, but the process takes about 10 days, so plan ahead.

When you apply, give your reason for requesting a variance, your planned work schedule, the type of equipment to be used and proof that the neighbors have been contacted. Please provide the decibel rating of equipment if it's new or unique.

Variance request forms are available on the first floor of City Hall at the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, or by mail or email, when you call 503-823-7350. *Sorry, no faxes.*

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building upgrades and review the need for a rehabilitation code for existing buildings.

The group's first project, which came out of the 2002-2003 Regulatory Improvement Workplan, involves several city bureaus and will ultimately update seismic triggers in city development regulations. The Code Guide and the potential rehabilitation code are expected to offer incentives for preserving historic buildings.

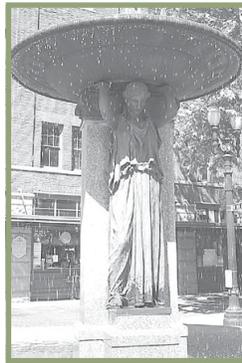
The task force, made up of design professionals, building owners, school, college and hospital representatives and individuals interested in historic building preservation, has been meeting monthly since April and will continue through June 2004.

Progress reports on the task force will be published in future issues of the Plans Examiner and on the Bureau of Development Services Web site, www.bds.ci.portland.or.us.

Livability, investment and code clarity drive new regulatory improvements

An advisory team of neighborhood and business representatives and city staff presented its recommendations for regulatory improvement to the City Council and the Planning Commission for review in June. The team's recommendations were a combination of new priorities and suggestions not chosen for the 2002 Regulatory Top 10.

To develop the proposed Regulatory Improvement Workplan for FY 2003-2004, the team chose to focus on changes in the code or procedures that would advance economic investment, neighborhood livability and the environment and clarify or streamline existing codes or procedures. The recommendations had to be consistent with state, federal and city laws and of benefit to more than a limited number of the city's diverse customer groups.



The public is encouraged to attend the Planning Commission hearing of the proposed FY 2003-2004 Regulatory Workplan at 7:00 p.m., July 8, in Room 2500A, 1900 SW 4th Avenue Building. The proposed workplan is available for review on the Web at www.regulatoryimprovement.ci.portland.or.us.

And you can read the Report to the Planning Commission on the Bureau of Planning Web site, www.planning.ci.portland.or.us.

SCORECARD: FY 2002-2003 Regulatory Improvement Workplan

Status	"Top Ten" plus regulatory code improvements
Completed	65 technical and administrative code changes
Completed	Interagency Agreements between 6 regulatory bureaus on permit turnaround and performance standards
Completed	Established the inter-agency Strategic Development Opportunities Team (SDOT)
Completed/Ongoing	Pilot testing money-back guarantee for selected permit applications
Completed	Web-based permit status information now available at www.bds.ci.portland.or.us
Completed	Reduced System Development Charges (SDCs)
Completed/Ongoing	Enhanced Services for Small Businesses launched, including: Small Business Guide to Development Services; Small Business Portal on BDS website; Extended evening hours to assist small businesses; and Lunch & Learn information presentations
Completed	"Independent Stakeholder Assessment of the Development Review Process" by Innovation Partnership
Completed	City Auditor's report on Development Services
Completed	Established a Customer Assistance Team (CAT) to speed problem solving
Completed	Offering New Owner Grace Period for new property owners with old code violations
Completed/Ongoing	Boeing continuous improvement training and process re-engineering
Underway	Drafted Charter of Regulatory Rights & Responsibilities, including right to appeal, which led to Customer Service Training for development review staff and managers
Completed	Established requirement for regulatory impact assessment for new and revised development regulations
Underway	Provisional citywide vision statement adopted by City Council

The Plans Examiner is a bi-monthly publication of the City of Portland - Bureau of Development Services
 Commissioner Randy Leonard, 503-823-4682

How to Reach Us

Monday thru Friday
 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

(e) = electronic messaging system, please leave detailed information and your call will be returned.

On the Internet visit:

www.bds.ci.portland.or.us
 www.planning.ci.portland.or.us

Development Services Center

1900 SW Fourth Ave.

Hours:
 7:30 am to 3:00 pm
 Thursday evenings
 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm

printed on recycled paper

BDS - Administration	503-823-7308
Building Code Questions	503-823-7310 (e, 4)
Fire Code Questions	503-823-7366
24-hour Inspection Request Recording	503-823-7000 (e)
Inspection Section, 1 & 2 Family Dwellings	503-823-7388
Commercial, Plumbing	503-823-7302
Building & Mechanical	503-823-7303
Electrical	503-823-7304
Development Services Center	503-823-7310
Development Services Center FAX	503-823-3018
Trade Permits	503-823-7363
Newsletter Contact , Ann Kohler	503-823-7886
Permit Status via FAX	503-823-7000 (4)
Permit Status via Voice Mail	503-823-7357
Permit Records	
Document Services / Current Applications	503-823-7357 (e)
Inspection Records / Finalled Permits	503-823-7660
Building Record Center FAX	503-823-7765
Septic Tanks / Cesspools	503-823-7247
Planning & Zoning , Information	503-823-7526
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	
Development Assistance	503-823-7761
Construction & Demolition Recycling	503-823-7107
Industrial Source Control	503-823-7585
FIRE BUREAU	
Development Standards, Sprinklers, Alarms	
Rich Butcher	503-823-3802
Flammable Liquids, Tanks, Hazardous Processes	
Doug Friant	503-823-3935

TRANSPORTATION

Development Requirements and/or Right-of-Way Policy	
Elizabeth Papadopoulos	503-823-7647
Minor Partitions, Cherrie Eudaly	503-823-7081
Local Improvement Districts, Andrew Aebi	503-823-5648
Street Permit Engineering, Jerry Markesino	503-823-7057
Transportation Plan Review,	
Richard Eisenhauer	503-823-7080
Systems Development Charge	
Richard Eisenhauer	503-823-7080

TREES – Urban Forestry (7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.)

Pruning/Planning/Removal Permits	
N / NE, Luke Miller	503-823-4511
NW / SW, Charley Davis	503-823-4523
Southeast, Ned Sodja	503-823-4440
Tree Cutting Ordinance, Frank Krawczyk	503-823-4011
Transportation Improvements, Joe Hintz	503-823-4025
Commercial Planning and Development	
Frank Krawczyk	503-823-4011
Residential Development and Improvement	
Myles Black	503-823-4018

WATER

Water Service Information	503-823-7368
Hydrant Permits	503-823-7368
Plan Review	
Commercial, Tony Re	503-823-7400
Residential, Todd Aschoff / Mari Moore	503-823-7368
Subdivision Planning, Tony Re	503-823-7400
Backflow Valve Installation Requirements	
Dave Barrigan	503-823-7479

We want to hear from you!
 If you have
 comments
 about the
 Plans Examiner
 newsletter or have
 suggestions for
 stories you'd like
 to see covered
 in the future,
 please call
 Ann Kohler,
 503-823-7886

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